Tucker Carlson's Interview With Russian President Putin - Excerpts From Transcript

The following are from a transcript of Tucker Carlson's interview today with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The thing is, each question and its accompanying answer are correct, but the order in which those questions were asked is not necessarily chronologically accurate below.

BEGIN EXCERPTS ----------

TUCKER: What would you tell the people running America?

PUTIN: Our message is Russia is not your enemy. We don't want war. We're ready for peace. Your leaders seek conflict. This is not what we want. Russia stands for its own people. We do not want what is not ours.

TUCKER: Would you visit Washington?

PUTIN: Yes, of course. I've been to the United States Before. I enjoy visiting and have met with every president except Joe Biden. If invited I would go. Yes.

TUCKER: What is your opinion of President Biden?

PUTIN: We're convinced he is not running the country. Let's say we have good sources that confirm that but it's plain for anyone to see for themselves. The US has now entered into a dark period. It has unaccountable leadership.

TUCKER: Do you think Joe Biden won fair and square?

PUTIN: I would rather not get into domestic American politics but will say my embassy reported your southern border was better run than that 2020 election. (chuckles)

TUCKER: One poll in America shows you more popular than Biden – any reaction?

PUTIN: (laughs) I don't know if that should be taken seriously but Russian ideals have support. We believe in traditional values; marriage is

between a man and a woman: men are men and women are women.

TUCKER: Who would you like to see as the next president of the United States?

PUTIN: Once again it is not for us to say or get involved. Contrary to longstanding accusations we do not meddle in your elections. We don't need to because the same people end up running things anyway.

TUCKER: Why did you invade Ukraine?

PUTIN: Did we invade or were we invaded? Look at the history. Look at the people living there. Historically it's we who were invaded and are simply fighting back now. The lands and people are Russian and we will have again what was always ours.

TUCKER: How will you feel if Trump won again?
PUTIN: We had good relations when Mr. Trump was president. There was no war. Our relations were at a high point. That said nothing is predictable or stays the same. We will have to see.

TUCKER: What do you think of Mr. Zelensky and

what would be your message to him?

PUTIN: I remember laughing to his jokes when he was a comedian in Russia. Let's go back to laughs.

TUCKER: Why is that?

PUTIN: There are strong financial entities in whose interest it is to keep us as adversaries. One of your presidents warned against that. We Russians do not have that problem.

TUCKER: Do you see the United States as an enemy?

PUTIN: No. Categorically no. We were allies in WWII. Russians helped settle Alaska, California and we were in Hawaii too. Our people are not enemies but those in DC are certainly not our friends.

TUCKER: Can you be more specific and name names?

PUTIN: It would be pointless. It is not up to us to solve your domestic issues. Besides, I'm sure you know the names better than us.

TUCKER: So are you saying your adversary is not Joe Biden but the people behind him?

PUTIN: Exactly. Joe Biden may not even be aware of what's going on. He may not understand the level of sanctions thrown at Russia. Who put those sanctions together? Those are the adversaries.

TUCKER: Is that why you are championing the BRICS?

PUTIN: The BRICS would exist anyway. It's a natural reaction to the western trading block. It's a counterweight. When the dollar is weaponized against states there will be a natural alternative to it. That's what we want.

TUCKER: Is that why you and Russia have been targeted?

PUTIN: It's more complicated than that but I'm sure it's a good part of the reason. Whenever the dollar is endangered the United States takes extreme measures. It cannot afford to have the dollar fail.

TUCKER: But isn't Russia weaker and more vulnerable economically than the US?

PUTIN: When you look at the size of economies we are small. But few people take into account our vast natural resources. Russia has over $80 trillion in the ground. No country even comes close to us.

TUCKER: What is your opinion of President Biden?

PUTIN: We are convinced he is not running the country. Let's say we have good sources that confirm that but it's plain for anyone to see. The US has now entered into a dark period. It has unaccountable leadership.

TUCKER: OK. Point well taken but don't you have the same issues in Russia.

PUTIN: Yes. To a degree. But in Russia those interests are more aligned with the thinking of the average Russian man on the street. In the United States that is not the case. The elites have deserted you.

TUCKER: so who do you think is running the US then?

PUTIN: The forces which have always run it. You

may change presidents but you do not change those in real power. That is who we have to deal with. Joe Biden is just a façade for this power structure.

TUCKER: Let's turn to politics. What's your opinion of President Biden?

PUTIN: We're convinced he's not running the country. Let's say we have sources that confirm that but it's plain for anyone to see. The US has now entered into a dark period. It has unaccountable leadership.

TUCKER: But there have been persistent reports you have cancer?

PUTIN: I assure you those rumors are false. If I had cancer and beat it I would share the good news and the cure with the world.

TUCKER: Thank you for sitting down with us. How is your health? There have been some rumors.

PUTIN: I'm glad to talk to you and through you to the American people. I'm fine. I feel good. Given my years I'm in the best of health but father time.

TUCKER: Let's turn to politics. What's your opinion of President Biden?

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TUCKER: When you say some fear him are you saying Musk has enemies?

PUTIN: It's clear to see he has enemies within the United States – the way he was stripped of $50 billion in assets – we would call that being signaled out for special treatment. It's unfair on the face of it.

TUCKER: Didn't you fear Musk when he started supplying Ukraine with Starlink gear?

PUTIN: If anyone seriously thinks a few internet dishes can defeat the might of Russia – well what can I say. But no, we did not fear or blame Mr. Musk. The government didn't give him much choice.

TUCKER: A lot has changed in the world. What's

your opinion of Elon Musk?

PUTIN: We see Mr. Musk as a businessman – a highly successful one. He's built a great fortune and a huge following. He's a unique thinker with a force of personality who cannot be bought. Some fear that.

TUCKER: Do you have any advice for Elon?

PUTIN: I would say continue on. Do not be intimidated. But if the going ever gets too rough there is Russia. We would gladly open our doors to you. We have welcomed American businessmen before and would value someone of Mr. Musk's calibre.

TUCKER: Let's turn to Trump. First tell me how you feel about the current situation with the likelihood of him being reelected?

PUTIN: It would be a bit strange and out of order but we are well prepared. He has promised to end the fighting in Ukraine and we support that notion.

TUCKER: How could he end the war so fast?

PUTIN: For one thing he never insulted us. He

has a great respect for Russia. We would start from a position of friendship and trust – then all problems are solvable. We could get it done. Trust me.

TUCKER: Are you referring to Biden calling you a killer?

PUTIN: We have been the recipients of numerous insults and slurs going back a few generations of politicians. Mr. Trump was a refreshing break from that. He is very popular in Russia. Perhaps that won't do him any good.

TUCKER: Are you in any communication with Trump?

PUTIN: No. Of course not. But should he win again our lines of communication would open up instantly whereas right now we have no dialogue with President Biden.

TUCKER: That's shocking to me. No one from the White House has been in contact with you?

PUTIN: That's right. No one has called since we congratulated Mr. Biden on his election victory. It's puzzling to us that communications are colder now than during the cold war.

TUCKER: How do you think the 2024 election will go?

PUTIN: We are just observing. It's our responsibility to be vigilant since it will impact the world. We are hoping the election is carried out in a way where the results can be believed. In Russia we do not have mail-in ballots.

TUCKER: Let's turn to China. What is your relationship like?

PUTIN: President Xi and I are especially close. Russia and China are enjoying good relations as of now which is an obvious asset to us since they are one of our biggest energy partners. We will continue to be friends.

TUCKER: There are accusations China has helped you in the war in Ukraine. Is that true?

PUTIN: That is not something I can discuss. Let's just say Russia isn't an isolated power. That strategy has failed. We have more allies and trading partners now than before the war started.

TUCKER: Do you ever contemplate a situation

where Russia and China may join forces against the United States?

PUTIN: Do you mean economically or militarily? I would say we want neither. It's not in our interest to clash with the US because all sides would lose in such a conflict.

TUCKER: Speaking of conflicts, what is your take on the Gaza situation?

PUTIN: It is really unfortunate. The Palestinians are being devastated. Israel is acting in an unconstrained manner. It shows the terrible double standards in the world. Where are the sanctions on Israel?

TUCKER: Is Russia involved in any way especially through your alliance with Iran?

PUTIN: No. Of course not. We do not oppose the existence of Israel but at the same time we support the right of the Palestinians to self-determination. We want to be even-handed.

TUCKER: Are you following what's happening on the US southern border?

PUTIN: Actually yes. It's part of my daily

briefing. We Russians find it ironically amusing your Congress will spend billions protecting foreign borders but neglect its own. It's quite laughable but deadly.

TUCKER: Deadly? How do you mean that?

PUTIN: Deadly serious, of course. People are dying daily crossing your border in an uncontrolled way. It is a free-for-all. The world hasn't seen anything like it in the modern era – reckless for a country to throw itself wide open like that.

TUCKER: Is Russia taking advantage of the border situation in any way?

PUTIN: No. Why should we? We don't have to do a thing. America is self-destructing. And as Napoleon said, don't stand in the way of your enemy destroying themselves.

TUCKER: So then you do see America as an enemy?

PUTIN: That was just a saying but the current administration is definitely not a friend.

TUCKER: Can that be changed?

TUCKER: Let's touch on climate change. It's still being pushed in the United States and Europe. What's your position?

PUTIN: Humanity is not even a Type 1 civilization on the Kardashev scale. If we can't harness the energy potential of the planet how can we control the climate?

TUCKER: Are you at least concerned?

PUTIN: I'm more concerned with real issues. Climate change is not one of them. The Earth does a fairly good job of regulating itself. And if Siberia gets a little warmer, all the better. More farmland for Russia.

TUCKER: But what would you tell the true believers who're convinced we're headed for disaster?

PUTIN: I'd tell them worrying about climate change is like complaining about the weather. If you don't like the climate, move. If you are worried about the weather, get an umbrella.

TUCKER: Along those lines, how do you see the transgender movement?

PUTIN: It's interesting to me that all the things which used to be a target of blackmail are now badges of honor. In Russia, there are no laws either way, but we certainly do not force our children into it.

TUCKER: Russia has been criticized for its anti-gay laws and as being unfriendly to LGBTQ+.

PUTIN: We have laws that protect our children. And we do not drape our embassies in rainbow flags. That's correct. Otherwise, we do not interfere in the private lives of adult citizens.

TUCKER: Do you follow American sports? We are about to have the Super Bowl.

PUTIN: In fact, yes. Russia is a great sporting nation. We hosted the Winter Olympics and the World Cup fairly recently. We like all sports.

TUCKER: What do you think of American football?

PUTIN: It's an interesting sport. But why do you call it football when the ball is almost always played with the hands? It also seems needlessly violent at times.

TUCKER: That's true. Will you be watching?

PUTIN: The game will not be shown in Russia.

TUCKER: So you won't get to see Taylor Swift either then?

PUTIN: No. We have been given a reprieve.

TUCKER: Thank you, President Putin, for your time.

PUTIN: That's why you have elections.

TUCKER: Thank you again for continuing to engage with me on so many different topics. Can we get even more interesting so to speak?

PUTIN: For sure. I am open to most subjects.

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